

SAFETY BULLETIN

SB02-015 LAWN MOWER SAFETY

(Reviewed 28 February 2002)

The power lawn mower is one of the most dangerous tools around the home. Accidents result in costly medical expenses or property damage. You should be familiar with your lawn mower in order to obtain the best results, have a neat appearing lawn, and prevent accidents. Here are suggestions to aid you in safely carrying out this necessary task:

Before

- ❑ Read the instruction manual to learn the proper way to start and stop the engine, how to make minor adjustments, and operate the controls.
- ❑ Have the blades sharpened, if needed. Clean the air filter. Change the oil. Remove oil and greasy dust from the engine. Clean debris from the air passages around the engine. Make sure the wheels are on tight and the mower is level. Adjust cutting height, if necessary. If you are not mechanically inclined, take the mower to someone experienced in lawn mower maintenance and repairs.
- ❑ Remember if you need to work on the lawn mower disconnect the spark plug first.
- ❑ Always refuel a power mower when it is cold or before starting the engine. Gasoline spilled on hot surfaces is easily ignited when the engine is restarted.
- ❑ Before you start to mow, clear the lawn of debris, including sticks, stones, toys, and garden hoses.
- ❑ Wear heavy-duty shoes and long pants to protect your legs. Wear safety goggles or glasses (safety sunglasses) to protect your eyes. Wear ear protection (like that worn on shooting ranges) to protect your hearing.
- ❑ Ensure you apply sun block (SPF-25 minimum), and have plenty of water on hand.

During

- ❑ Mow only when the grass is dry. In addition to the damage done to the lawn, wet grass is slippery and there is a greater danger of a foot accidentally sliding into the mower. In the case of electric mowers, dangers are increased because a person could be electrocuted if the cord was accidentally cut or the mower developed a short in the wiring.
- ❑ When mowing banks, always mow across the slope, not up and down. There is less possibility of your feet slipping into the mower or having the mower slide over your feet.